

# CHAMPIONS CHATTER

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CHAMPIONS FOR A DRUG-FREE KENTUCKY COALITIONS

2ND QUARTER, 2006

## WATCHING OVER OUR COMMUNITY

### BRECKINRIDGE COUNTY COALITION FOR CHANGE

By Deborah Shortt, Communicare Regional Prevention Center

Breckinridge County is located on the Ohio River between Meade and Daviess Counties. Locally, it is often referred to as "Breck County." Breckinridge County has a population of 18,648 people in a land area of 572.41 square miles. There is an average of only 32.6 people per square mile and plenty of land for an agricultural economic basis that relies heavily on tobacco crops.

In 2002, community members began organizing the formation of a community coalition to serve Breckinridge County by addressing alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD). With consultation from the Communicare Regional Prevention Center, the coalition began its initial stages of operation by recruiting members.

From the beginning, the newly formed Breckinridge County Champions Coalition has had membership from Hardinsburg City Police, Cloverport Independent Schools, Breckinridge County Schools, Family Resource Youth Services Centers, Kentucky State Police, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment, Breckinridge County Health Department, Communicare Regional Prevention Center, McDonalds, Cloverport City Police, Department of Community Based Services, local youth, Breckinridge County Herald News and the Ministerial Association.

Since the first meeting in 2002, the coalition has grown and formally expanded their mission and is now called the Breckinridge County Coalition for



Youth members of the Breckinridge County Coalition for Change

Change and adopted the slogan "Watching over Our Community." Utilizing state Champions funding, the coalition has implemented ATOD evidence-based prevention strategies in the schools and community.

The school systems in Breckinridge County rely heavily on the Coalition for support in implementing evidence-based ATOD curricula. The coalition supports the training of teachers and staff for curricula implementation as well as having assisted in purchasing program materials.

Youth involvement is an integral part of the Coalition. In 2004, ten high school students attended an alcohol environmental strategies workshop presented by the Alcohol Prevention Enhancement Site and hosted by Communicare Regional Prevention Center. The youth spent two days exploring alcohol issues and the relevance of alcohol environmental strategies in

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a dry county. After returning home, the youth were energized and immediately began the nearly two-year project of getting a "Social Host Ordinance" passed.

Months of research, planning, drafting and presenting were rewarded in the spring of 2006 when the Breckinridge County Fiscal Court passed the first Social Host Ordinance in Kentucky. The Breckinridge County Youth presented their project at a national conference and began mentoring other coalitions and youth groups in the state on this initiative.

Other drugs have also been targeted by the Breckinridge County Coalition for Change. After attending the Governor's 2004 Drug Control Assessment Summit and researching the intentions of the newly formed Office of Drug Control Policy, the coalition began collecting and assessing local data regarding methamphetamine. In 2005, over 2,000 Breckinridge County community members have been reached with Methamphetamine Prevention and Awareness Programs. The Meth Watch has been implemented in the community and 20 local retail vendors have been trained and partnered with the coalition to assist with the program.

In 2003 the Coalition was asked to be part of the Ohio County Drug-Free Communities Mentoring Program. Through this partnership, the Coalition received extensive training on The Developmental Assets and successfully marketed and implemented the assets framework to schools, faith-based programs and businesses in the area. Through this initiative,

four successful town hall meetings have been conducted which provided the Coalition with a forum to share, promote and recruit.

Formal community partnerships have assisted the Coalition by establishing collaborative efforts to address common goals. The Breckinridge County KY-ASAP Local board has partnered with the Coalition to address needs and resource assessment tasks as well as guidance on local policy issues. The Breckinridge County Tobacco Coalition has partnered with the Champions Coalition to establish a formal policy and program for youth tobacco violations.

This program is unique due to the cooperation of the local police department. Local law enforcement issues citations to youth under the age of 18 in possession of tobacco products and refers them to the TEG/TAP (Tobacco Education Group/ Tobacco Awareness Program) program implemented by the tobacco coordinator. Failure to complete the program results in court action. The Coalition played an integral role in the establishment of this program through planning, collaborative meetings and funding of the curriculum.

In its relatively short existence, The Breckinridge County Coalition for Change has been successful in reaching their goals to address ATOD. Members of the Coalition look forward to continuing their work to make a difference in their community.

## NEW BEGINNINGS IN DAVIESS COUNTY

By Terry Stinson, River Valley Regional Prevention Center



Community members meet to develop the Daviess County champions Group

In April 2006, a teacher from Trinity High School in Whitesville, Kentucky contacted the RiverValley Behavioral Health Regional Prevention Center and requested information on what she could do to address underage drinking in her community. She gave names of some key individuals in the community who were also concerned about this issue. The Regional Prevention Center then contacted those individuals to see if they were interested in addressing this issue.

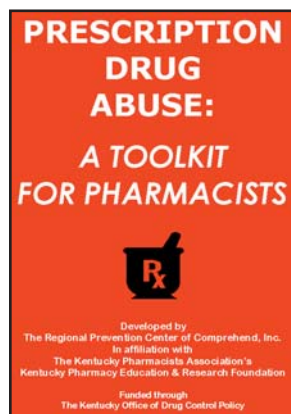
On April 12, 2006, a meeting took place with public officials, school staff members and other citizens in the Whitesville community. Those in attendance wanted to not only address underage drinking, but methamphetamine manufacturing and other substance abuse issues. Follow-up meetings were conducted over the next few weeks. This small group grew and wanted to make a difference in their community. With the assistance of the Regional Prevention Center, this group submitted and was approved a Champions grant to help start up "Champions for a Drug-Free Whitesville".

After a few more organizational meetings, a coalition was formed and officers were appointed. Currently, they are in the finishing stages of creating by-laws.

It is the hope of this coalition by fall of 2006, there will be more members and action will begin to educate the community of Whitesville about the various substance abuse issues facing them and what can be done about it.

# TOOLKIT FOR PHARMACISTS

By Karen Hall, Comprehend Regional Prevention Center



Karen Hall, a prevention specialist with Comprehend Regional Prevention Center, collaborated with the Kentucky Pharmacist Association staff to develop the “Prescription Drug Abuse: A Toolkit for Pharmacists.”

The Toolkit is a resource for pharmacists to use at the point of sale of prescription drugs and to share information with

patients regarding prescription and other drug use and abuse. A pharmacist can expect to provide care to numerous patients who abuse alcohol or drugs, or to patients who have a family member who abuses drugs and/or alcohol on a daily basis.

The Toolkit for pharmacists provides “slicks” in a binder for quick access to substance abuse prevention information that can be shared with patients. Informational resources specifically target parent, elderly and teen patients. In addition, screening and intervention tools and contact and resource information is included for use by the pharmacy staff. Because the public values and trusts the advice of their pharmacists, his/her recommendations are likely to be taken seriously.

A brief intervention message slick can be copied and attached to prescriptions for stimulants, opioids/opiates, sedatives/tranquilizers and other potentially addictive medications, as each pharmacist reiterates the danger of their potential for misuse and abuse. This intervention message states:

- Keep this medication in a safe place, where it cannot be stolen.
- Dispose of or hide any unused portion of this medicine.

The Toolkit also includes two posters for pharmacies to display in their waiting areas. Both posters stress the importance of keeping prescription and over the counter medications locked up or hidden in a safe

place, since one of the most common ways people get possession of prescription drugs is to take them from the medicine cabinets of family and friends.

The “Prescription Drug Abuse: A Toolkit for Pharmacists” was introduced at the Kentucky Pharmacists Association Annual Convention on June 22nd in Bowling Green. Governor Ernie Fletcher was present at the “unveiling” of the toolkit and expressed in a speech his support of Kentucky pharmacists who, each day, are presented with opportunities to educate the public on the prevention of prescription drug abuse. Governor Fletcher encouraged the pharmacists to use the Toolkit regularly in their pharmacies.

In order to get these prevention toolkits into all 1,100 Kentucky pharmacies, Regional Prevention Centers’ staff across the state will assist in distributing the toolkit.

Prescription drug abuse continues to escalate in the United States, and pharmacists, as well as all other community members, are needed to take action in the effort to tackle this critical issue. Working together, we can make our communities healthier, safer places, reducing instances of prescription drug abuse!





# RPC GUEST COLUMN

## PREVENTION ADVOCACY

By Donna Wiesenbahn, Bluegrass Regional Prevention Center



A recent newsletter indicated Congress has already begun working on next year's budget. Those of us who work in public arenas know proposed budget cuts in the field will surely follow as rain follows dark clouds. Along with such cuts come pleas from our constituents for letters, emails and phone calls to legislators

advocating for each program we fear will be lost.

These scenarios and crisis reactions recently prompted Kentucky Regional Prevention Center directors to establish an ongoing Prevention Advocacy Committee. This volunteer group's mission is to look at prevention funding and programs with an eye to legislative contacts and create a well-planned, long-term communication strategy

The objective is not to have an onslaught of legislative letter-writing when a particular program is targeted for budget cuts, but rather a continuous, consistent and persistent plan to keep prevention on the radar screen.

The Prevention Advocacy Committee has met twice, fleshing out pertinent information prevention specialists

can use to educate legislators and creating a marketing strategy to reach the legislators.

The first in a series of "push cards" has been developed, printed and mailed to all Kentucky Legislators in early July. These brief, specific, eye-catching mailings provide information about Kentucky prevention and highlight Regional Prevention Centers. In addition to the push cards, visits to legislators will occur later in the year.

Consistent contact and invitations to programs within each region will be extended to our representatives, allowing prevention to become up close and personal! If you are interested in joining the group or providing information and suggestions, please feel free to contact one of the following Prevention Advocacy Committee volunteers:

*Gary Hall - [garyhall@rvbh.com](mailto:garyhall@rvbh.com)*

*Tamela Pumphrey - [tpumphrey@sevencounties.org](mailto:tpumphrey@sevencounties.org)*

*Linda Verst - [lverst@fuse.net](mailto:lverst@fuse.net)*

*Ronne Nunley - [vnunley@pathways-ky.org](mailto:vnunley@pathways-ky.org)*

*Donna Wiesenbahn - [djwiesenha@bluegrass.org](mailto:djwiesenha@bluegrass.org)*

Effective advocacy is a stretch for all of us. Yet, as we shared in the first meeting: "If not us, then whom? If not now, when?"

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

*Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Strength to Love, 1963*

# YOUTH PARTNERSHIPS GET THINGS DONE IN KENTUCKY

By Drew Wollin, Lifeskills Regional Prevention Center

Every year hundreds of youth in Kentucky work to change the attitude of their peers, as well as adults, regarding the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD). This past school year (2005-2006) was no exception. The Kentucky Youth Empowerment System (Kentucky YES!) awarded funds to youth groups across the state to focus on ATOD issues in their schools and communities.

Forty-eight youth groups representing nine regions across the state received a total of \$66,000 from Kentucky YES! The funds were used to implement a variety of activities, many of which had direct impact on policy creation and enforcement both in schools and communities.

Youth across the state planned and implemented community events for Red Ribbon Week, Kick Butts Day and the Great American Smoke Out. They provided educational presentations on topics from alcohol to methamphetamine and worked on creating wallet and educational trading cards. They created radio, newspaper, billboard and television media to address various issues in their communities. They planned and attended conferences and trainings including Youth Tobacco Conferences, Underage Drinking Conference, Student Drug Testing Summit and National Town Hall Meetings. Youth worked on local campaigns to create clean indoor air ordinances, social host ordinances



Members of the YES! Youth Group with Governor Fletcher

and school policy change initiatives. They worked with Operation Storefront and local law enforcement.

This article features only a small percentage of the accomplishments of Kentucky YES! groups during the 2005-2006 school year. Changing attitudes and perceptions is no easy task. Youth do not easily back down from their ideals and beliefs and they should be more fully utilized for not only their energy and drive, but also for their ideals and passions.

For a complete report on the outcomes and successes of Kentucky YES! groups visit the Office of Drug Control Policy website at [www.odcp.ky.gov](http://www.odcp.ky.gov). If you would like to get involved in Kentucky YES! contact your local Regional Prevention Center.

## CONFERENCE DATE CHANGE



The Champions/Ky-ASAP joint conference "The Power of ONE" previously scheduled for October 4 - 6 has been moved to October 25 - 27. To register or for more information, visit [www.odcp.ky.gov](http://www.odcp.ky.gov) or contact Sandra Harston, Champions Coordinator, at 502-564-8294.

See you then!





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